

THE ACTIVITY OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTS IN THE AREA OF CREATING LOCAL INNOVATION (BASED ON THE EXAMPLE OF LUBLIN COUNTIES, POLAND)

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Abstract. The aim of the article is to characterize and evaluate the activities undertaken since 2010 by the local governments of selected Lublin counties aimed at strengthening local innovation, under the provisions of the local innovation strategy (LIS). The article indicates the activities specified in the LIS that should be intensified to improve its innovation and the activities which affect the possibility of increasing the innovativeness of communes. In each of the counties, seven local commune governments were chosen, in which the survey was conducted using an interview questionnaire addressed to the representatives of local authorities. The results indicate that the pro-innovation activities of the surveyed local governments should be regarded as insufficient, taken in a selective and not very common manner, they rarely go beyond the standard activities. As such, they are not an effective factor in the processes of local innovation. In particular, local authorities were too little involved in building local knowledge capital. It has been shown that, in this field, it is reasonable to strengthen the institutional environment of the implementation of the LIS. Moreover, local governments insufficiently built the basis for strengthening the innovation of the selected key sectors of the local economy. It was indicated that greater activity of the local authorities is justified in the creation of long-term core programmes for the stimulation of commune innovation.

Key words: local innovativeness, local innovation strategies.

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Introduction

The economists analysing the issue of innovation, its role in the economy and the determinants, initially focused on the domestic economy, and then headed towards regional aspects. Today, more and more interest is raised by the local scale of this phenomenon.

At the levels of territorial systems, the category of innovativeness is understood as the capability to participate in the innovation cycle and is seen as the goal of development. Local government units (LGUs) are equipped with instruments of influence on the economy, space and society that can contribute to encouraging the innovativeness of regional and local economy. The essence of the new paradigm of local development is to conduct local, pro-innovation, economic, social and spatial policy stimulating the competitiveness of the local economy. Such a policy, involving the cooperation of both public and private entities, is to stimulate the improvement of the capability of local entities to participate in the innovation cycle (Brol R., 2009, pp. 59-60).

Global economic forces have raised the profile of regions and regional governance not least because of the rise to the prominence of the

regional and local business clusters as vehicles for global and national economic competitiveness (Cooke P., 2001, p.31). The key position is taken by the matter of shaping regional innovation systems treated as a system of interactions between science, R&D, industry, the education system, finance and public authorities supporting interactive and collective learning. The basis of its operation is the existence of networking, environmental innovation (Nowakowska A., 2011) and the integration of regional and local governance.

Local innovation systems (strategies) as an important part of regional innovation systems (strategies)

LGUs are important players in the regional innovation system, along with entrepreneurs, the R&D sector, business environment entities. Their role in the creation and diffusion of innovation is to create conditions to improve the efficiency of the innovation process by initiating or animating improvement in the economic conditions and the functioning of certain elements of the innovation system, as well as the creation and strengthening of ties between the innovation system entities (Study of the..., p.3).

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At the regional level, the main activity is the development and implementation of regional innovation strategies. The strategies are to build a partnership for the regional innovation system as part of the so-called golden triangle, including local authorities, research units and enterprises (Brol R., Sztando A., 2011). Due to the large number and diversity of entities forming regional innovation systems, a robust system of multi-level governance appears to be a sine-qua-non condition for undertaking successful regional innovation strategies (Pellegrin J., 2007, p. 218).

The design and the implementation of innovation strategies at the regional level in the case of the regions where public resources are increasingly limited and partly devoted to short-term goals, the scope of innovation policies has to focus on a relatively narrow set of promising long-term objectives and technological-sectoral targets. What is more, the identification of promising targets should be based on the recognition and the enhancement of a local base of knowledge and competencies (Caloffi A., Mariani M., 2011, p.414). The cognitive concept of local conditions of regional innovation capacity interprets innovation as a result of the presence of the processes of collective learning and adapting to the risks of innovation (Capello R., 2011, p.116).

From a policy, perspective regions are supposed to be able to mobilize resources and institutions towards the development of local areas and should be able to develop a strategic capacity to improve their economic cohesiveness. The relevance of the local dimension of governance has led to the creation of a new strand of research in regional studies, stressing how local policies can play a key role in fostering learning processes. Accordingly, local innovation systems are based on the generation of regionalized learning systems where some local innovation policies are activated to transfer technologies, to enforce technological cooperation, and to provide support and

incentives to innovative networks (Muscio, A., 2006, p. 775).

The design and implementation of local development strategies require not only the involvement of local authorities and local development agencies but also local integration strategies with the knowledge-based economy, the incorporation of skills, innovation, entrepreneurship and social integration (Giguere S., 2007, p.38). The support of local innovation processes must be also embedded in local factors and the social and cultural environment. It must be stressed that the use of local development strategies as a management tool for local development is particularly important, yet difficult in peripheral and less developed regions (Adamowicz M., 2015 p. 11, 18).

The commune, strategic creation of the innovation of the local economy is supported by, among others: 1) a large number of relationships connecting local governments of communes and local economic entities and scientific-research organizations; 2) a high degree of the dependence on the operation of local governments on their innovation; 3) a wide range of the communes' tools of impact on local businesses (Brol R., Sztando A., 2011).

The many activities aimed at supporting innovation and entrepreneurship that can be taken by local governments include, among others: the conduct of a well-thought policy towards investors, granting loans and credit guarantees, leasing or creating facilities, creating guarantee funds, business incubators, technology parks, establishment of research and development facilities, establishment of institutions to stimulate economic initiatives, development of business infrastructure equipment, the creation of economic activity zones, attention to technical infrastructure, undertaking promotional activities (Huczek, p. 31). Local authorities should also co-create the atmosphere of pro-innovation behaviour, mobilize communities to the introduction of new products,

processes, management, and create the atmosphere of the local entrepreneurship. The impact on the local territorial-production system also requires a modern, innovative office (Huczek M., 2006, pp. 31-32).

The aim, materials and methods

The Regional Innovation Strategy to 2020 (2014) is, next to the Lublin Region Development Strategy for 2014-2020 (2014), the basic planning document defining the framework for the economic development of the Lublin region based on the research and innovation generated in research institutions and implemented by companies. It is a development and refinement of the Lublin Region Development Strategy for 2014-2020 in the section devoted to the development of research and innovation for smart specialization. Priority 3, entitled "Strengthening the business environment institutions and public administration open to innovation" assumes the course of measure No. 3.2 entitled "The development of an efficient and open to innovation public administration".

The Lublin region undertook steps to develop the local (county) innovation strategies (LIS) under the system project commissioned by the Marshal's Office¹. These included the formulation of the assumptions of local innovation strategies for the selected counties identified as areas of potential growth or areas directly threatened with stagnation. The first group includes the areas of the Pulawy Region, Leczna and Swidnik counties, the second group - the area of the Biala county and the area of the counties of Chelm, Krasnystaw and Wlodawa.

With reference to the above-mentioned strategic documents, which are the basis of pro-innovation activities at the local level, it is reasonable to monitor the activity of local commune governments within the activities considered as priorities for strengthening the

local socio-economic innovation systems. The aim of this article is, therefore, the characteristics and evaluation of the activities undertaken since 2010 by the local governments of selected Lublin counties and aimed at strengthening local innovation, resulting from the provisions of the LIS. The article also identifies the activities specified in the LIS that should be intensified to improve its innovation and the activities that affect the possibility of increasing the innovativeness of communes. The following research hypothesis was formulated: local commune governments to a limited extent undertake activities to promote local innovativeness beyond the standard measures aimed at developing local entrepreneurship. In the case of the more developed counties, the activity is more advanced.

The research was carried out in two counties - Pulawy - recognized as one of the areas of potential growth and the Biala county, representing the areas threatened by stagnation (Figure 1).



Source: authors' own study based on the "Voivodeship development strategy..."

Fig. 1. Administrative division and location of the Lublin voivodeship

In each of the counties, seven local authorities were selected for studies, including urban, urban-rural and rural units². The selection of units for

¹ The system project "Lublin Region Intellectual Capital 2010-2013" implemented under the operational programme Human Capital, Priority VIII Regional human resources, measure 8.2. Transfer of knowledge, sub-measure 8.2.2. Regional innovation strategies, www.kil.lubelskie.pl.

² The Biala county: the towns Miedzyrzec Podlaski and Terespol and rural communes: Terespol, Wisznice, Tucznia, Drelow and Konstantynow (36.8 % territorial units studied); in the Pulawy county: the town of Pulawy, rural-urban communes: Kazimierz Dolny and Naleczow and rural communes: Baranow, Janowiec, Wawolnica, Kurow (63.6 % territorial units studied).

testing was made taking into account their degree of development and their specificity that are determined by the diversity of locations in the area and the nature of the economy. In each of the studied fourteen units, a survey using an interview questionnaire was conducted with the participation of a representative of the local authority – a mayor or a commune administrator. The study was conducted during the period 1 July - 10 August 2015.

Conditions and assumptions of the Local Innovation Strategies of the surveyed counties

The studied region is located in the Central-Eastern part of Poland, bordering with Ukraine and Belarus. Lublin Voivodeship is one of the least developed, peripheral regions of Poland and the European Union. The bio-economy sector creates large capacity to implement smart specialization and innovations in the region (Zwolinska-Ligaj M., 2016, pp. 281-282).

The Lublin Region is a region with an average level of development of innovation potential, qualified in the group of voivodeships deepening the delay and losing distance. The region is a weak diffuser, with little capacity to generate innovation, but having resources for the development of innovative. The region is characterized by a shortage of working age people capable of generating innovation and marketing them. Low levels of income and expenditure of households do not generate a demand for innovative products and services. The greatest is the importance of the food industry, concentrating 25 % of all employees in the industry and generating almost 24 % of the production sold (Diagnosis ... p.13).

The formulation of the mission of the LIS for the Biala county and the city of Biala Podlaska - the area at risk of economic stagnation - stressed the need for "supporting the process of economic transformation in the Biala county and the city of Biala Podlaska to increase their competitiveness and innovation by stimulating the development of the local innovation system and multifaceted

cooperation in the areas considered key to the development of the county and the city". In the case of this area, its vision for the development assumed that the "Biala county and the City of Biala Podlaska are areas specializing in sectors related to freight forwarding and logistics, low-carbon energy, organic food production, tourism and agro-tourism, innovative and pro-health medical services and support the functions of the Lublin Metropolitan Area as sub-regional area". The overarching strategic aim points to the "Development of an innovative forwarding and logistics sector as well as the sectors of energy (low-carbon energy), production and processing of organic food, tourism and agro-tourism, medical and pro-health services as part of the local innovation system". The following trends were priorities: 1) the creation of conditions for the development of the local innovation system; 2) the strengthening of the process of the technological specialization of the county; 3) the strengthening of the process of the functional specialization of the county (LIS for the Biala county ...).

In the case of the LIS for the Pulawy county and the City of Pulawy – area of potential economic growth, the mission included a provision on "The support of the process of economic transformation in the area of Pulawy county and the City of Pulawy to increase their competitiveness and innovation by stimulating the development of their local innovation system and multifaceted cooperation in areas considered key to the development of the county and the city". The desirable vision of the development of this area assumes that "the Pulawy county and the City of Pulawy are areas specializing in sectors related to innovative chemical and energy and mining industries, manufacturing and food processing, tourism, innovative medical and pro-health services and support the functions of the Lublin Metropolitan Area as sub-regional areas". The overarching aim, therefore, took into consideration the "Development of innovative

chemical and energy and mining industries, manufacturing and food processing, tourism, medical and pro-health services as part of the local innovation system." In the case of the Pulawy county, the same wording was used for the development priorities in the Local Innovation Strategy of the Biala county and the city of Biala Podlaska (LIS for the Pulawy county...).

Pro-innovation activities of local governments

Within the three priorities of local innovation strategies, the studied LGU were most active in relation to the process of creating conditions for the development of the local innovation system. Slightly lesser was the commitment associated with the strengthening of the process of technological specialization of the county, and the minimum activity was related to the process of the strengthening of the functional specialization of the county (Table 1).

With regard to the activities aimed at improving the conditions for the development of the local innovation system, the units declared their activities mainly in the context of consolidating the network of relationships and connections with various entities of the local innovation system. In this area, the activity associated with establishing international contacts should be noted, creating relationships between units of local governments, cooperation with scientific institutions and the business environment as well as participation in various projects implemented by entrepreneurship environment institutions, innovation centres, producer groups and local action groups. However, public-private partnerships were practically not developed as important potential areas of creating local, innovative development

projects. Another area of the perceived activity of the units in terms of strengthening the conditions for the local innovation system development were the activities aimed at increasing the innovativeness of the office, by raising the qualifications of employees and the introduction of advanced technological solutions in the commune economy. The less-developed area of potential importance for the strengthening of local innovation was the measures taken to develop the knowledge of local communities about the possibility of implementation, the support available and the benefits of pro-innovative activities. The activities designed to develop knowledge of modern media, such as websites and Internet platforms, were not common. Local authorities declared a preference for innovations implemented in the directions of development of communes, and supporting innovative projects and promoting local brands.

In the case of the units surveyed, the implementation of priority "Strengthening the process of the technological specialization of the county" consisted in taking up activities including the development of IT and technical infrastructure and supporting the sector of tourism services. Rarely, however, tourism development implemented integrated tourism projects that use information and communication technologies. Half of the LGUs declared taking up initiatives in the field of education and raising the competence of farmers and developing the sector of products and services related to the promotion and protection of health. Quite rarely, however, the surveyed communes supported the development of the key sectors of the local development economy, including the use of local natural resources in an innovative manner.

Activities taken since 2010 by local governments aimed at strengthening local innovativeness pursuant to the provisions of the "LIS for the Pulawy county and the City of Pulawy" and the "LIS for the Biala county and the city of Biala Podlaska" according to the priorities of the LIS and the types of the surveyed territorial units (number of responses, N=14)

| No | Activities | Pulawy county | | Biala county | | Total |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| | | rural communes | urban and urban-rural communes | rural communes | urban communes | |
| | LSI Priority 1: Creating conditions for the development of the local innovation system | | | | | |
| 1. | implementation of modern solutions in the office | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 8 |
| 2. | improving the qualifications of office workers | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 8 |
| 3. | preference for innovation in the on-going development directions of the commune | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| 4. | usage of advanced technologies in commune management | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| 5. | developing public-private partnerships | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 6. | creating relationships between local government units | 0 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 8 |
| 7. | establishing international contacts | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| 8. | creating web services / platforms to disseminate knowledge, exchange experience related to the possibilities of innovative activities | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 9. | popularization of knowledge about the possibilities of financing innovative projects | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| 10. | supporting innovative projects, including cooperation networks | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 6 |
| 11. | cooperation with scientific institutions and business environment | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 8 |
| 12. | dissemination of knowledge about the benefits of cooperation | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 13. | participation in integrated projects by innovation centres, producer groups, Local Action Groups and other | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| 14. | supporting the scheme for the promotion of local brands | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| 15. | promotion of the environmental values that can be crucial in technological processes | 1 | 2 | - | - | 3 |
| 16. | building pro-innovation awareness through the implementation of innovative educational paths in schools | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 |
| | LSI Priority 2: Strengthening the process of the technological specialization of the county | | | | | |
| 17. | support for the development of key sectors of the local economy | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| 18. | support for the cooperation for the development of the products and services based on local raw materials | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| 19. | support for education and raising the competence of farmers | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| 20. | support for the promotion of tourist values of the region, implementation and development of niche products and tourism services | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 10 |
| 21. | development of cooperation between institutions aimed at promoting traditions, ethnic cultural, local tourism | 1 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 11 |
| 22. | implementation of integrated tourism projects using ICT | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| 23. | strengthening and development of the sector related to the protection and promotion of health | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 |
| 24. | development of IT and technical infrastructure | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 11 |
| 25. | support for the implementation of innovative solutions for the agri-food production | 0 | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| 26. | support for the effective methods of food production and processing | 0 | 0 | - | - | 0 |
| 27. | support for the use of science and industry to protect the environment | 0 | 2 | - | - | 2 |
| 28. | support for the implementation of innovative solutions for agricultural production | - | - | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 29. | support for the production, promotion and distribution of agri-food products | - | - | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 30. | efforts to intensify the cultivation and production of flax and herb products | - | - | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | LSI Priority 3: Strengthening the process of the functional specialization of the county | | | | | |
| 31. | development of the functions of the Pulawy Region and the Pulawy county by creating local partnerships, innovation | 0 | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| 32. | strengthening cooperation with entities from the key sectors: chemical, energy and mining, tourism, agriculture, agri-food, medical and pro-health services | 1 | 1 | - | - | 2 |
| 33. | implementation of projects under the Territorial Strategic Investments | 1 | 3 | - | - | 4 |
| 34. | development of training specialized personnel for the industry: chemical, energy and mining | 0 | 0 | - | - | 0 |
| 35. | cooperation within the City (Biala) Functional Area | - | - | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 36. | development of border functions within the Terespol Border Functional Area | - | - | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| 37. | cooperation with Wlodawa and Chelm counties in the development of the forwarding and logistics sector | - | - | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: authors' calculations based on empirical research

The innovative activities undertaken by the surveyed LGUs showed some differences in between the counties. Noted should be the fact that the units from the highly-developed Pulawy county, with reference to the creation of the conditions for the development of the local innovation system, often indicated to undertake such activities as: the implementation of innovative technological solutions in the commune economy, establishing cooperation with scientific institutions and business environment and participation in integrated, innovative projects with institutions with significant potential impact on the local innovation, including innovation centres or LGD. In the Pulawy country, activity can be noted in the promotion of environmental values of the major importance in industrial processes. On the other hand, in the case of the Biala county, with a much smaller growth potential, there were attempts aimed to strengthen this potential by creating relationships with other LGUs and only to support innovative local projects.

In the case of the activities related to strengthening the process of technology specialization of the country, the activities most commonly undertaken by the surveyed communes definitely highlighted the activities of the entities representing the Biala county. They concerned the development of the technical and IT infrastructure, the development of cooperation between institutions to promote local traditions and the development of tourism, the sector related to the promotion and protection of health and cooperation with LGUs for the development of the key sectors of the local economy.

The specific activities concerning only the Pulawy county - support for the innovativeness of the production processes of raw materials and food processing and aimed at protecting the natural environment and the environment of Biala - including support for different phases of the production cycle of food made of flax and herbs - were taken very rarely.

In the Pulawy county, the contribution of the units to the development of the functional specialization of the county was the implementation of the projects under Territorial Strategic Investments, while - in the Biala county - it was the contribution to the development of the border functions of the Terespol Border Functional Area.

The urban and urban-rural communes, possessing the capacity to more strongly influence the development processes of local innovativeness presented particularly proactive approaches within such activities as the development of cooperation between institutions promoting cultural, ethnic traditions and local tourism development, the creation of relationships between local governments, participation in integrated projects implemented by local and supra-local institutions, support for the development of tourism and the development of IT and technical infrastructure. The units were also crucial for engaging in activities related to the strengthening the process of the functional specialization of the county.

Depending on the county, the surveyed LGUs recognized some other type of activities as crucial and demanding intensification in an effort to strengthen the local innovativeness in the implementation of the LIS. In the case of the Pulawy county, it was most frequently pointed out that the activities were related to the introduction of innovative solutions for selected sectors of the local economy, including those based on the use of local raw materials - e.g. in the agribusiness sector, tourism or services and products related to the protection and promotion of health. This group of units also highlighted the need to strengthen measures aimed at the development of various forms of dissemination of knowledge underlying the taking up of innovative activities. Lesser was the importance attributed to the activities in the area of development cooperation with various institutions, activities in developing projects and implementing pro-

innovative solutions in the office. In the case of local governments in the Biala county, the activities subject to the need for intensification included primarily the dissemination of knowledge - as in the Pulawy county - and greater activity in the development of pro-innovation projects. To a lesser extent, they accentuated the need to intensify cooperation with all kinds of institutions and the need for strengthening the innovation of different sectors of the local economy.

The representatives of the governments surveyed perceived inherent factors outside the local socio-economic systems among the main factors which affect the possibility of increasing the innovation capacity of their communes. These included the European Union funds and the emergence of external investors. Quite a big role was ascribed to the activity of local entrepreneurs (Table 2).

Table 2

The activities on which the possibility of increasing the innovativeness of the commune depended

| No | Activities | County | | Total |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | Pulawy | Biala | |
| 1. | The use of EU and other funds | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| 2. | The activity of local entrepreneurs | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| 3. | Bringing an external investor | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | Developing local innovation networks, clusters | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. | Stimulating the creation of new enterprises | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. | Use of resources and natural assets | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 7. | Extension of the technical infrastructure | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. | Support of local commune governments in the development of the existing enterprises | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 9. | Supporting the development of business environment institutions | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 10. | Support of institutions | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | | 21 | 20 | 41 |

Source: authors' calculations based on empirical research

The respondents perceived the development of local cooperative relations and stimulating the creation of new businesses or strengthening and utilization of the resource potential of the local natural environment and technical infrastructure as not having a major impact on local innovation.

It is also characteristic that the respondents, representing the sector of institutions saw no possibility of the impact of the institutional factor on local innovation. Single indications were related to the aid of local communities in the development of the existing enterprises, supporting the development of business environment institutions, or help from other institutions. The activities which were not indicated by any representative of the surveyed local governments included also pro-environmental investments, the development of public-private partnerships and the implementation of the Regional/ Local Innovation Strategy.

Conclusions

The discussion presented in the paper makes it possible to formulate the following conclusions.

- 1) The pro-innovation activities of the surveyed local governments related to the provisions of the Local Innovation Strategy should be regarded as inadequate, taken in a selective and not very common manner. As such, they are not an effective factor in the processes of local innovation. The hypothesis formulated in the study has been verified positively. The local governments of communes to a limited extent take up activities to promote local innovation beyond the standard measures aimed at developing local entrepreneurship. Furthermore, in the case of the more advanced counties, the activities are more advanced.
- 2) The activities to improve conditions for the development of the local innovation systems and to strengthen the technological

specialization of counties undertaken by the surveyed LGUs were predominated by those related to the development of technical infrastructure, creation and development of cooperative relationship between the entities of the local innovation system and the concern about the increasing innovativeness of offices. The local governments were insufficiently involved in building the local knowledge capital of various groups of the community constituting the basis for the strengthening of local innovation systems. At the same time, local governments sought knowledge, recognizing its role in the development of local innovation. The factor of the dissemination of knowledge was in fact recognized by the respondents as one of the key ones and demanding intensification in an effort to strengthen local innovation. It is reasonable, therefore, to strengthen the institutional LSI environment in this regard. In addition, the local governments to an insufficient extent formed the basis for strengthening innovation of the selected key sectors of the local economy. In this area, the possibilities inherent in favouring innovations in the implemented directions of the development of communes were not used, as well as supporting innovative projects and promoting local brands. It is, therefore, grounded to provide greater activity of local authorities in the creation of long-term core programmes - strategic framework - to stimulate the innovativeness of communes. Such programmes, which are an extension of commune development strategies, should form a comprehensive, internally consistent basis for the implementation of pro-innovation activities in the key sectors of the local economy. In the opinion of the respondents, the activities related to the introduction of innovative solutions and implementing innovative projects in the selected sectors of the local economy, including those based on

the use of local raw materials – e.g. the agribusiness sector, tourism or services and products related to the protection and promotion of health, were seen as one of the key factors and requiring intensification of local innovativeness factors.

- 3) In the case of the units from the highly-developed Pulawy county, the creation of conditions for the development of the local innovation system often involved taking up more advanced activities, requiring the use of knowledge and financial resources and presenting an open approach to cooperation with the regional innovation system institutions. Lesser importance was attributed to the activities in the area of the development of cooperation with various institutions, activities in developing projects and using pro-innovative solutions in offices, due to the higher level of sophistication in this area. In the case of the Biala county, co-operation was more limited, with a much smaller growth potential, the partners of the cooperative activities undertaken mainly represented the local government sector, and the surveyed units performed the supporting function of the projects. To a lesser extent, they were involved in the activities in the development of pro-innovation projects.
- 4) The urban and urban-rural communes possess the capacity to more strongly influence the development processes of local innovativeness. As a result, they have a considerable capability of inspiring and taking up various forms of local economic and social cooperation. These units also play an important part in deepening the process of the functional specialization of the county.
- 5) The EU funds are a significant support of commune innovation processes. This factor, combined with the inflow of investment from external sources and the activities of local enterprises constitute, in the opinion of the respondents, the flywheel of local

innovativeness. Its activation requires the governments in the programme stimulation of strengthening of the institutional factor, local innovativeness. including an increase in the role of local

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